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Fifteen-year sentence for man convicted of poaching-related offences in Kruger National Park

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Section Ranger Neels Van Wyk inspects a three-day-old carcass of a poached rhino in the Kruger National Park.

PHOTO: James Oatway, Gallo Images, Sunday Times

- **The Skukuza Regional Court has handed a 15-year sentence to a man found guilty of poaching-related offences.**
 - **He was found to have illegally entered the Kruger National Park on two occasions.**
 - **The second time he entered the park illegally he was out on bail for the first charge.**
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A man has been sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment for poaching-related offences in the Skukuza Regional Court in Mpumalanga.

Een Sihlangu, 24, was convicted of trespassing in the Kruger National Park, possession of a firearm which had its serial number removed, possession of a dangerous weapon and possession of ammunition.

"Sihlangu was charged along with his co-accused Forster Lubisi, who pleaded guilty to the offence and was sentenced to 32 years' imprisonment by the same court. This resulted in a separation of trials," said National Prosecuting Authority spokesperson Monica Nyuswa.

Sihlangu was arrested on two separate occasions while illegally entering the Kruger National Park.

In 2018, he and Lubisi were found in possession of a firearm, seven bullets, an axe and a knife. Sihlangu was arrested and later granted bail.

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In April 2021, he and Lubisi entered the Stolsnek section of the Kruger National Park. They were found in possession of eight live rounds of ammunition, three knives and a firearm, said Nyuswa.

"[Sihlangu] pleaded not guilty during the trial and later changed his plea to guilty. The state prosecutor Lot Mgiba handed in ballistic reports which proved that the firearm he had in his possession was prohibited and had its serial number erased.

"The State told the court that the accused did not show remorse for his actions. After he committed the first offence, he continued with illegal poaching," said Nyuswa.